External/Stakeholder Relations Committee
March 9, 2020
Presentations
Item 3
Legislative Program Overview
Goals of the Program

- To educate stakeholders, elected officials, their staff and advocates about Access
- Advocate for policies that benefit Access Services and its customers
- Address constituent concerns as needed
- Establish and maintain a positive relationship and open line of communication with stakeholders and elected officials
Federal Legislative Program

Our audience includes:
• Federal elected officials
• Federal Transit Administration
• House and Senate Committee staff
Federal advocate: Simon & Company

- Simon and Company is a Washington, D.C. based firm that provides federal affairs and legislative assistance to mainly public agency clients.

- Simon & Company has represented Access for more than a decade. Simon & Company has developed an expertise and understanding of the issues facing Access Services and paratransit agencies in general.

- Ms. Jen Covino is the current President and our primary contact.
Key Issues

• Monitor and track all legislation (e.g. Reauthorization) and regulations that may affect Access’ funding, administration, and/or operations.

• Proactively seek additional funding and consistency in regulations.

• Oppose legislation or regulatory proposals that would significantly expand the requirements of ADA transportation without providing necessary funding.

• Meet with elected officials and staff in Washington, DC to discuss Access initiatives, and work constructively with FTA officials.
Advocacy Efforts

• In 2007, Simon and Company was instrumental in helping Access receive its first federal earmark. The $735,000 grant was used to help integrate Access into the regional Transit Access Pass (TAP) program.

• Simon helped Access work with the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to allow Access to purchase Smartdrive cameras off the federal bid list, which saved the agency a significant amount of money and resources.

• Simon helped Access work with its legislative delegation to insert language in the 2015 FAST Act that allowed Access to keep its coordinated fare system.

• Simon and Company continues to assist staff with funding opportunities as they become available through various federal agencies.
State Legislative Program

Our audience includes:

• State legislators, legislative staff, and state agencies
• Senators and Assembly Members representing Los Angeles County
State Advocate: Gonsalves & Son

• Gonsalves and Son is a Sacramento-based lobbying firm.

• Gonsalves & Son was founded by former Assemblyman Joe A. Gonsalves in 1975. The firm is led by Anthony Gonsalves and includes his two sons Jason Gonsalves and Paul Gonsalves.

• Gonsalves & Son has over 50 years of legislative experience and represents more cities than any other California lobbying firm.

• Access has worked with Gonsalves for over 10 years.
Key Issues

• Represent Access in Sacramento with elected representatives, key staff members, state agencies.

• Execute Access’ advocacy efforts, including communication with legislative and other governmental officials for the purpose of influencing legislation or administrative action.

• Obtain support from elected officials for Access grant applications.

• Attend and provide testimony on behalf of Access in legislative committee hearings.

• Monitor and track all legislation and regulations that may affect Access’ funding and/or operations.
Advocacy Efforts

• In 2019, Gonsalves worked with staff to draft and distribute a letter outlining the effects of Assembly Bill 5 on its taxi subcontractors and asking that the taxi industry be exempted from the legislation.

• In 2018, Gonsalves coordinated a meeting with Department of Health Care Services to seek clarification on regulations governing the reimbursement of Medi-Cal transportation. The meeting helped Access staff develop a strategy to pursue reimbursement, which could generate significant monies for the agency.

• Gonsalves has passed several bills related to Access, including legislation clarifying that Access is a public entity.
Local Legislative Program

Our audience includes:

• City/County of Los Angeles
  • Mayor’s Office
  • Councilmembers
  • L.A. County Board of Supervisors
• Metro Board and staff
• City & County Commission on Disability
• Member Agency Cities
• ILCs and regional centers
Local Advocate: David Gershwin Consulting

• David Gershwin has two decades of experience working in L.A. city politics and local government.

• He served as Chief of Staff to current Mayor Eric Garcetti when the Mayor served as the President of the Los Angeles City Council.

• Before working with Mayor Garcetti, Mr. Gershwin served as Communications Director for then Council President Alex Padilla.
Key Issues

• Ensure adequate regional funding for paratransit service

• Inform elected officials and stakeholders about the provision of ADA paratransit in L.A. County

• Address constituents concerns as needed

• Inform stakeholders about Access projects and initiatives, including autonomous vehicles

• Assist with Access’ internal and external communications, including media relations
Advocacy Efforts

• There are numerous occasions where Mr. Gershwin has helped Access staff work with local political offices and other entities on issues related to Access’ operations.

• Mr. Gershwin has helped raise Access’ profile and established a positive dialogue with Mayor Garcetti’s office and the offices of Los Angeles Councilmembers and other elected officials.

• He is on call in the event of emergencies and has assisted staff with media relations.
Item 4
Assembly Bill 5 (AB 5)
Update

access
Background

- New state law modifies who should be considered an employee versus an independent contractor
- Could require many taxi drivers to be classified as employees
- This would significantly impact Access as roughly 50% of Agency trips are performed by taxis
  - Potentially reduce the availability of taxis
  - Significantly increase the cost of delivering service for the region
AB 5 Status

- Taxi operators are seeking an exemption from the law
- Access is working in coordination with Metro’s government affairs staff to support this effort and has submitted a letter of support
- Access has commissioned a study to determine the cost impacts on its operations from AB 5
- There are no immediate impacts to Access’ operations or budget
Current

Allocated

- FHWA Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) ($70.9M)
- FTA Section 5310 – Capital ($10.1M)

Competitive

- FTA Section 5316 – Access to Work Program ($4.5M)
- FTA Section 5317 – Out of Service Area ($958k)
Recently Awarded

Allocated

• Metro Transfer Trip Expansion ($238k)

Competitive

• Metro Expresslanes Net Toll Revenue Grant ($1.13M)

• FTA Transit Bus Automation Strategic Partnership ($120k)
Applied

- FHWA Automated Driving System Demonstration - requested $10M (AV pilot program)

- FTA Integrated Mobility Innovation - requested $3.5M (AV pilot program)

- FTA Mobility for All - requested $350k (Where’s My Ride App)
Pending

- USDOT BUILD - request $10M for AV pilot project
- CA Volkswagen Mitigation Trust - request $750k to $1M for electric vehicles
- CA Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program - $3M to $4M for AV pilot
- FTA Buses and Bus Facilities Program - amount TBD for hybrid/electric ADA accessible vans